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ABSTRACT

Based on the work of the National Council on Research in Child Welfare (NCRCW), this handbook is designed to help social service agency executives cope with changing times for child welfare agencies, strengthen traditional services to meet today's needs, and analyze and plan for the future. The manual aims to demystify quality improvement theory and to show, through practical, hands-on tools and exercises, how the process can be used to clarify and improve existing programs and services. The manual's sections cover preparing the organization, defining services, assessing the impact of services, and improving services. The manual's chapters are: (1) "The Changing World of Services for Children and Families: Reinventions for the 21st Century" (Seelig and Pecora); (2) "How Do We Propose To Help Children and Families?" (Savas); (3) "Closing the Gap: Does the Program Match the Blueprint?" (Davis and Savas); (4) "Implementing an Outcome-Oriented Approach to Case Planning and Service Improvement" (Traglia, Massinga, Pecora, and Paddock); (5) "How Do We Know We're Making a Difference?" (Kluger and Alexander); (6) "Quality Improvement in the Agency: What Does It Take?" (Zirps and Cassafer); (7) "How Can Planning Make It Happen?" (Cassafer); (8) "How Can Evaluation Help the Agency with Licensing, Funding, and Accreditation?" (Carman); (9) "How Can Integrated Information Systems (IIS) Be a Support?" (Benbenishty and Oyserman); and (10) "Making It Happen: Strategies for Organizational Change" (Teather, Gerbino, and Pecora). Most sections contain appendices, and each chapter contains references. (EV)

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